

Stranger Things 3 Speculative Script by AbnormalGlasses

Series: Stranger Things 3 Speculative Script [1]

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: I wrote an episode of stranger things, Language, Mild Violent/Disturbing imagery, Post-Canon

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper & Mike Wheeler, Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper

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Summary:

Hey. Thanks for reading all 11k words of this mess. If you liked it, let me know - If you didn't, let me know what I can do better.

This is a script I wrote for practice/an excuse to write something Stranger Things related. I have some plans to continue this, so if you'd like to see more gimme a comment and I'll see what I can do!

Stranger Things 3 Speculative Script

STRANGER THINGS 3 EPISODE 1 SPEC SCRIPT

HAWKINS, INDIANA – SEPTEMBER 25, 1986

EXT. The Upside Down – Night/Day/What's the difference

Will is running for his life. He is scared, and he constantly looks over his shoulder in terror. He slips on one of the many vines blanketing the ground, and falls hard. The camera moves over his shoulder to show the Mind Flayer, a massive, inky cloud of arms, reaching towards Will. He screams and scrambles to get away – but the shadow catches him, and he is engulfed with tendrils that pour into his mouth, his eyes, his nose, his ears. He then quickly sits up in his bed.

He's in his room, shirtless, sweating, and breathing heavily. Rapid footsteps are heard, and Joyce Byers crashes into his room.

JOYCE

Will?! Are you alright? What happened?

WILL

It's nothing, I'm fine.

Joyce is fussing over him, pressing a hand against his forehead, checking his heart through his chest, looking into his eyes.

WILL

Mom!

He bats her away.

WILL

I'm fine! I promise!

He pauses.

WILL

It was just a dream. A bad dream.

Joyce lowers her head and runs a shaky hand through her rat-nest hair.

JOYCE

(Choking out the words)

Are you sure?

Will, on the verge of tears, nods.

JOYCE

I can call Jim, we can have El –

WILL

Mom, I promise, I'm fine. Please go to bed. I'm sorry I woke you, okay?

Joyce looks as she's about to say something, but takes a deep breath and nods.

JOYCE: Okay. Okay, Honey.

She kisses his forehead.

JOYCE

You – You come get me right away if you feel anything, you know that?

WILL

I know, Mom.

JOYCE

Okay.

With difficulty, she leaves his bedside and walks out of his room. She leaves the door cracked open.

Will lays back in his bed, staring up at the ceiling. After a few

moments, he rolls over to face his bedside table, upon which lays a lamp, a scattered deck of trading cards, and a walkie-talkie. He considers the Walkie for a moment, then rolls over to face his wall.

INT. BYERS HOUSEHOLD – NIGHT

Joyce is pacing the living room, kneading her hands. She nervously glances down the hallway towards Will's room, then towards the phone hanging on the kitchen wall. She takes a step towards the phone, but stops, shakes her head, and reluctantly returns to her bedroom.

Back in her room, she sits on her bed and pulls a package of cigarettes out from her bedside table's drawer. The camera fixes on the contents of the drawer for the split-second it's open, and a mess of papers covered in webs of purple-blue crayon scribble sit covering the drawer's bottom. It's the map Will had drawn while under the control of the Mind Flayer, two years before. Joyce shuts the drawer as quickly as she's removed the smokes and the lighter, takes one from the box, and shakily lights it. As she takes a drag, she repositions the framed picture on the nightstand. Will and his friends Mike, Eleven, Lucas, Max, and Dustin, are all smiling towards the camera, grinning out of a group hug. The camera fixates on the picture as the scene transitions around it, leaving the exact same image, now in a different bedroom.

INT. HOPPER HOUSEHOLD – MORNING

The camera leaves the image, now sitting askew on Eleven's nightstand. In response to a jarring alarm, Eleven herself sits up from bed and palms her eyes. She taps the alarm clock off, then groggily jerks her head, the drawer of her bureau flinging open. A ball of clothing shoots out, which she sloppily catches from midair.

Now on Jim, the Chief is quietly humming along to the vinyl track he's put on in the other room as he fries strips of bacon on the stove. He plates enough for two, and brings the dishes over to a small, two-chaired dining table set by a window. He returns to the kitchen and

reaches inside the old refrigerator to retrieve a half-empty jug of orange juice. Pouring two glasses, he sets them on the table and seats himself. As he begins to eat, Eleven walks out of her room. She gives a tired smile to Jim, and sits at the table, silently jabbing a fork into her sunny-side-up.

JIM

(After regarding her for a moment)

Late night?

Eleven shrugs.

ELEVEN

Lots of homework.

JIM

How'd you think you did?

ELEVEN

Alright. Wasn't too hard.

JIM

Hey, good. Good. That's great.

There's a pause.

JIM

Look, Jane... (He finds his words) I know it feels like you're... left out. I mean, I know you want to go to school with Mike and Will and all your friends, but until we're dead sure that this thing really has blown over, it's safer to stay quiet. You know that, right?

ELEVEN

I know.

She half-smiles.

ELEVEN

I like school with Joyce. She's fun.

JIM

Yeah, she's great.

He remembers something, and his expression shifts to annoyance.

JIM

Hey, by the way, what's this I hear about you skipping on lunch? The Eggos I send with you are for after you eat, you know that.

He points an accusatory fork at her, and she smiles guiltily.

JIM

I want to hear you're eating your lunch, young lady, or you're outta luck for dessert from here on out.

Eleven makes a face.

ELEVEN

Fine.

Glancing at the clock mounted above the table, she involuntarily taps her wrist.

ELEVEN

(To herself)

Eight-Twenty.

She finishes the last scrap of toast on her plate and levitates her dishes towards the sink, while she grabs her backpack off the back of the couch.

ELEVEN

Gotta go now. See you later.

JIM

Hey.

He wipes his mouth on his napkin and stands up, bringing Eleven in to a hug.

JIM

I love you, kiddo.

He plants a kiss on the top of her head.

JIM

Be safe, be smart. See you at 8.

Eleven hugs him back, then runs out the door.

ELEVEN

Bye!

EXT. HOPPER HOUSEHOLD – DAY

Eleven runs down her porch and lengthwise across the cabin to a small shed. Without needing any keys, she disengages the five-padlock security system and opens the rickety shed door, revealing a worn-yet-violently-neon-green bicycle. After undoing the bike's lock, she awkwardly tugs it free from its prison of garden rakes, hoses, and a single moth-ridden kiddie pool. As she pedals away, the door slams behind her, relocking. She bikes through the woods, coming to a stop when she reaches the backroad running alongside the forest. After glancing both ways down the road, she reaches into her backpack and pulls out a Walkman. She slips the headphones over her head, presses the play button set in the side of the device, then pockets it. 'All I need is a Miracle' by Mike + The Mechanics begins to play. Slightly bobbing her head to the music, she once again glances down the road, then turns the bike into the street and starts pedaling. As Eleven pedals off frame, the camera pulls out to an extreme wide shot of the road and the surrounding woods, Hawkins Lab becoming visible in the distance as the camera pulls out farther and farther.

Cutting back to Eleven, we follow her bike's tires as they kick up plumes of leaves. For a few more shots, Eleven's journey on the bike is shown cutting through yards, through more groves of trees, and eventually coming to a stop at the rear of the Byers' household. She dismounts her bike upon arriving, silences her Walkman, and walks her bike over to the Byers' back door. Ruffling her own hair out of habit, she hops up the steps and raps on the door. Bouncing on her heels for a few moments in waiting, she is greeted by Joyce.

JOYCE

Good morning, Jane! Come on in!

Eleven returns Joyce's smile and strolls into the house.

INT. BYERS HOUSEHOLD - DAY

Eleven walks over to the kitchen table and dumps her backpack in one of the chairs. She glances at the smattering of dirty dishes that have been left on the table, and with a motion of her hand, the dishes flip into the sink – slightly more violently than she had intended.

ELEVEN

Oops! Sorry, Joyce.

JOYCE

Oh, it's alright, dear. I'll take care of this, have a seat.

Eleven, flush with embarrassment, sits at the table and starts to unload her backpack. Looking over, she notices the refrigerator slightly ajar, and a toolbox on the floor next to it.

JOYCE

So, how did you get on last night?

El returns her attention to Joyce and her homework, resuming the unpacking.

ELEVEN

Pretty good.

Joyce glances back at her.

ELEVEN

Oh, um – Pretty well.

Joyce winks at her, nodding. She returns to the sink, picking bits of shattered ceramic plate out from beneath the soapy water.

ELEVEN

Is the refrigerator broken?

JOYCE

Hmm? Oh, I'm not sure. It just started... kind of smoking this morning. I unplugged it, had to move all the food into an ice chest outside.

Eleven frowns in curiosity. She removes a pocket dictionary from the front fold of her backpack, and places it on the table next to her astronomy textbook and unicorn-themed trapper keeper. From that, she messily shakes loose several leaves of paper - most of which are inundated with scrawls and repeated vocabulary words - a bundle of pencils tied in a rubber band, a crumpled pack of gum, and a half-empty tissue package.

Joyce finishes the dishes, dries her hands on the towel draped over her shoulder, then sits perpendicular to Eleven at the table.

JOYCE

Let's have a look at what you've got.

As they begin to go over Eleven's homework, the camera leaves the table and pans over to the living room. It slowly zooms in on a framed drawing hanging on the wall, a purple and blue scribble overlaid by a red X. The part of Will's map that had, with Bob's help, saved Jim Hopper's life two years previous.

INTRO

INT. HAWKINS HIGH – DAY

Mike is standing next to his locker, loading his backpack. He pays little attention to the crowd around him until Dustin walks up and ruffles his hair from behind, making him Jump.

MIKE

Jesus! Don't do that.

DUSTIN

Gear up, we're going over now.

MIKE
What?

DUSTIN
Will's house. You made the plans, dipshit!

MIKE
Right, yeah. Okay, I'll be right outside, just give me a second.

Dustin walks away, leaving Mike to his locker. He watches Dustin leave for a moment before shaking his head to himself. He shoulders his backpack and walks off, slamming his locker's door.

EXT. HAWKINS HIGH – DAY

Dustin, Lucas, Will and Max are already outside the school, congregated around the flagpole and fervently discussing amongst themselves. Mike gives them a slight wave as he trots down the front steps of the school, pushing through a mass of departing students as he makes his way towards the meeting post.

WILL
Mike!

MAX
'Bout time, Wheeler

MIKE
Yeah, sorry.

LUCAS
Max was just going to tell us about the campaign she's got planned after we finish this one. It sounds crazy.

MIKE
Cool.

MAX
Yeah. I can't say too much without giving anything away, but it might involve a certain undead Lordship hellbent on reclaiming his

kingdom from the world of the living.

LUCAS

Woah.

WILL

That sounds awesome!

Mike nods.

DUSTIN

Son of a bitch, where the hell is he?

MIKE

Steve?

LUCAS

Give him some time.

Dustin slinks down the flagpole and sits on his feet.

DUSTIN

(Under his breath)

If we start late again because of his extracurricular activities, I swear to god...

INT. BYERS HOUSEHOLD – DAY

Panning through the house in a sweeping shot that starts in the kitchen, a glimpse is caught of the messy table, papers and books and pencils and calculators strewn about it. Panning into the living room, we see that the floor is also blanketed with papers, most of them covered in incoherent doodles. Eleven is sitting cross-legged in the middle of the room, a Crayola box sitting next to her as she stares into the television. Glancing up at the clock above the doorframe, she frowns to herself. She waits a few moments before glancing again, anxiously reading the time.

ELEVEN

Three-fifteen.

She quickly stands from her seated position and hops to the window, peeking through the half-drawn blinds to look into the driveway. When she sees nothing, her stare turns frustrated, and she turns to face the clock again. Tapping her foot out of boredom and impatience, she trudges across her web of scribbles and into the kitchen. Eyeing the pantry, she cocks her head, causing the door to open and reveal a litany of canned food, including soup, vegetables, and various sandwich spreads – including a particular snack. Eleven reaches inside the pantry and snatches the jar of Marshmallow Fluff from the back. She unscrews the cap, fumbles around the sink for a spoon, then resumes her previous position in front of the television. Mid-spoonful, she remembers the pantry door, and looks back at it to close it. Returning her attention to the television, she flips through the channels until she reaches one playing a cheesy romance flick. Turning up the volume without leaving her sitting position, she settles into her jar of Fluff and fixates a bored gaze on the pair of attractive costars making out in the rain. Glancing back at the clock, which the camera reveals to read 3:17, she breathes a sigh laced with frustration.

ELEVEN

Late.

EXT. HAWKINS HIGH - DAY

They party is sitting around the flagpole, scanning the parking lot. Dustin is peering down the road through binoculars.

LUCAS

Is he here yet?

DUSTIN

(Aggravation present)

No.

MIKE

Maybe we should just walk, then. It wouldn't take us that long to get to Will's from here –

LUCAS

Are you serious? I don't know about you, but the rest of us have, like, five hundred pounds of books to carry.

MAX

Yeah, there is no way I'm walking there and then home. That's like ten miles.

MIKE

(Sighing) Fine. But if we have to wait three hours for him to show up again then I'm walking.

DUSTIN

No need, compadres. Behold our savior.

Dustin gestures over the group's shoulders, prompting a curious turn of gaze to the school's parking lot, where a rust-red BMW 733i piloted by Captain Steve Harrington is pulling up.

WILL

Finally!

Steve rolls down his driver's side window and sticks his head out.

STEVE

Hey! You coming or what? Let's go!

A cloud of mumbling follows the party as they file into Steve's car, cramped. Dustin, managing to elbow his way to shotgun, speaks up first.

DUSTIN

You're late, Harrington. That's the third time this week.

STEVE

(With an edge of amusement)

How about I just leave you shits to fend for yourselves?

Dustin makes a face at him as he drives out of the parking lot. They continue back and forth as the camera pans to the rear seats. Mike is positioned in the passenger's side window seat, absently staring out the window. Will, squished between Mike and Lucas, is drumming his

fingers on his legs. Max is pressed against the driver's side window, her skateboard awkwardly between her legs.

WILL
Mike?

Mike glances at him.

WILL
You okay?

MIKE
I'm fine. Just looking out the window.

WILL
(Unconvinced) Okay.

A pause, then Will brightens.

WILL
Well, El's gonna be there today.

Mike nods, slightly smiling, which is soon replaced by a furrowed brow.

MIKE
Hopper should let her stay past eight tonight. She isn't five years old.

Will shrugs to himself.

WILL
Well, we have that in common. Overbearing parents.

Mike nods and rolls his eyes.

MIKE
Is your mom still on you all the time?

WILL
Not as much as she had been, but, yeah.

Seeing Mike's mixed look of pity and annoyance, Will backtracks.

WILL

Well, I mean – she isn't on me, really, she's just worried, that's all.

There's a pause.

MIKE

Doesn't it bother you?

WILL

What?

MIKE

That after all this, we're still treated like kids. After everything that's happened?

Will shrugs.

WILL

I guess.

MIKE

You guess?

WILL

I don't know, it's not all bad. Sometimes it's nice to just be a kid and not have to worry about anything.

Mike frowns and returns to his window.

MIKE

Now all we do is worry, Will.

Will's expression agrees with him.

Cut to an aerial shot of Steve's car driving down the road.

INT. BYERS HOUSEHOLD – DAY

Eleven is sitting against the living room couch, sitting on a throw pillow. She's studying the romance playing on the screen as she

gorges on marshmallow fluff, occasionally glancing up at the clock.

She gets to her feet, clunks the jar of fluff on the coffee table, and walks down the hall to Will's room with her hands stuffed in her pockets. Once inside, she pulls open a drawer in his nightstand and pulls out a slightly-crumpled comic book magazine. She shuts the drawer and makes a turn to leave the room, but catches something in the corner of her eye. Turning back to face Will's nightstand, she picks up a grainy framed picture of Will, Mike, Dustin, and Lucas from several years ago. They all look much younger, huddled around a table covered in Dungeons and Dragons fare. Only Will is smiling towards the camera; Mike is attempting to cover his face with his Dungeon Master's notecards while Lucas and Dustin argue over something. Eleven smiles at the picture, quickly polishing it with her sleeve before setting it back down towards the front of the nightstand.

Leaving Will's room and returning to sit in front of the television, she opens the comic book, which the camera can now see as Uncanny X-Men. She stretches out until she's laying on her back facing the ceiling, and flips open the comic – shortly before remembering the jar of Marshmallow fluff on the counter, which she pulls to her hand with a flick of her chin. She sticks a spoonful in her mouth and leaves it, boredly skimming through the comic book. As she does, the television cuts to static. Eleven slowly looks up from the comic, confused. An odd sound, like a helicopter mixed with an untuned radio, emits from the television and fills the room. She puts down the comic and moves to change channels, but the static stays.

The sound of a car door slamming can be heard, as well as muffled voices. The television returns to normal. Eleven, distracted by the television, takes a moment before jumping to the window to see Steve's newly arrived car spitting out her friends. Steve, trying in vain to get their attention, is pointing back to the house with a hand on his hip, speaking over the rowdy group of Dustin, Lucas, and Max. Mike is leaning against the car door, visibly restless, while Will shoulders his backpack and starts to walk up the driveway to his house. At this, Eleven whips around and regards the mess she's made. In a fluid motion, she turns the television off and scoops up the Fluff, unceremoniously flicking the spoon into the sink. She kicks open the pantry, screws the cap back on, and shoves it in. Turning, she frowns at her mess of papers, and sticks her hand out. The papers, crayon

box and comic book fly towards her, landing in a mess on the kitchen floor. She flinches as the paper cloud settles around her, just in time for Will to open the door.

WILL

Hey, El! (Pause as he looks into the kitchen) What happened?

ELEVEN

I, um, sneezed!

WILL

Oh. Bless you, I guess.

He dumps his backpack next to the door and walks into the living room. He's followed shortly by Dustin, who gives Eleven a slight wave before tossing his own backpack into the living room and diving over the couch. Steve follows him, just entering the doorframe, while Mike, Lucas, and Max duck into the house.

STEVE

The hell happened in here?

WILL

El sneezed.

Steve makes a face that betrays his mixture of indifference and resignation while Mike raises his eyebrows and runs into the kitchen to help her clean up.

As Mike and Eleven bend down to start picking up the mess of papers, Mike catches her eye and gives a small smile.

MIKE

I missed you this week.

ELEVEN

I missed you too.

She smiles at him, continuing to shovel papers.

Steve once again attempts to garner their attention by knocking on the wall.

STEVE

Alright, listen up – If Mrs. Byers isn't back by five, you call the Chief or you call Mrs. Wheeler. Will's in charge. Don't use the oven and don't go wandering away from - Hey!

He raises his voice towards the end of his spiel, talking over Dustin's hushed wisecracking. They look up at him abruptly. Steve shakes his head.

STEVE

Just don't burn the house down, shitheads.

He closes the door behind him.

DUSTIN: Sure thing, mom.

The shot returns to the still-messy kitchen. Mike picks up a paper and looks at it, examining the multicolored swirl of overlapping ellipses.

MIKE

What were you drawing?

Seemingly embarrassed, Eleven attempts to cover the pages, pausing before answering.

ELEVEN

The sky.

Mike smiles and looks at the paper again.

MIKE

It's really pretty. You should frame it.

ELEVEN

It's not that good.

He playfully makes a face at her, and she retaliates.

MIKE

But seriously, if you want to draw you should talk to Will. He's amazing at it, he could totally teach you some cool stuff.

They finish scooping the pages, standing to dump them on the table. They stand in silence for a brief moment, looking at each other.

ELEVEN

How was school?

MIKE

It was alright. Same old. (A pause.) How about you?

ELEVEN

Same old.

She smiles.

DUSTIN

El, you and your chick flicks, jeez.

Eleven snaps to look at the television, where the movie she had been watching earlier was playing. Dustin is uninterested, however, and he quickly changes the channel. Max shoots Eleven a knowing look.

MIKE

Leave her alone, Dustin.

LUCAS

Yeah, we all know you watch the same movies when your mom is asleep.

MAX

Dusty's a sucker for Flashdance.

She smirks at him, and Dustin blushes. Will and Lucas laugh.

DUSTIN

That – no, I wasn't – Shut up!

Mike and Eleven exchange amused glances before they return to the living room.

MIKE

Why are we all sitting around watching TV? We're burning daylight, let's move!

Mike claps his hands together as he says this, prompting a renewed wave of interest in Dustin, who shoots to his feet.

DUSTIN

(with an accented flourish) Make haste to Stronghold Byers!

The party quickly jumps to their backpacks and slips them on while Will runs down the hall to his room. The group files out of Will's back door, Will himself following shortly after with a bag and lockbox in hand.

EXT. BYERS HOUSEHOLD – DAY

Will, Dustin, Lucas, Max, Mike, and Eleven are sprinting across the backyard, making a beeline for the woods. They seem to be full tilt, engaging in an unspoken race – in which the victor is Eleven, who overtakes the boys to come in a close finish next to Max, both laughing the whole way.

They arrive at the location of the fort once known as Castle Byers, a branch-and-tablecloth constructed hideout filled with books and board games. Now however, sits a battered trailer covered in camouflage mesh, surrounded by outward-facing, semi-sharpened sticks jutting from the ground (most of which had fallen over). Jim Hopper's old trailer. The door is sporting a series of locks, ranging from padlock to combination. Above the door, a sign reading **STRONGHOLD BYERS** in bold red letters was nailed; and just below that, a sign labeled **NON-HUMANS BEGONE**.

Eleven, out of breath, laughs along with Max as the remainder of the party trots up behind them.

DUSTIN

(Severely out of breath) Son of a bitch.

MAX

You people are so out of shape. Everything went downhill once you stopped biking everywhere.

LUCAS

(teasing) Yeah, thanks, Will.

DUSTIN

Nobody can ride their bikes anymore because of you, Will.

WILL

Hey!

They begin to hurl confetti blasts of autumn leaves at a giggling Will, who flails his arms and makes a break for the trailer. Eleven, laughing along, points a hand at the door to the trailer, unlocking the complicated security measures, and the door swings open. They run inside and start frantically unpacking their backpacks, pulling out large collections of paper held together with staples and chip clips, along with bags of dice and elastic bandfuls of pencils and markers. Will pulls out a game board from behind the ratty window-side couch and sets it - along with his bag and lockbox - on the coffee table in the center of the room. Opening the box, he removes several plastic game pieces and some dice. The trailer has evolved greatly since Hopper's days in it - posters from countless movies and arcade games now plaster the walls, wallpapering every inch - save for the back of the beat-up RCA sitting atop a rusted metal crate. Flanking the TV are stacks of VHSs, a Nintendo Entertainment System covered in game cartridges, and a teetering tower of comic book magazines. A battery-powered radio sits on a table to the immediate right of the door, along with extra batteries and a small pile of empty pizza boxes.

The party surrounds the round glass coffee table with blankets and pillows. Barely in unison, they sink comfortably into seated positions and begin to set up their papers and dice.

MIKE

(With a voice dripping of slight regal tint) The court of Will the Wise is now in session! All will be seated at the round table!

He pauses a moment to assure that yes, everyone is in fact sitting, before continuing.

MIKE

(Clearing his throat but keeping up the accent) Madmax, Lord and Dungeon Master, we beseech you to refresh us with the tales of our previous adventure!

He initiates a slight bow, an extended hand inviting Max to speak.

MAX

Beseech away, peasant.

She proceeds to scan her notes before finding what she's looking for.

MAX

The day of September the Twentieth, in our year Nineteen-Hundred Eighty-Six. The Caverns of Vedellian were, at long last, conquered after a daring – yet stupid – (She glances at Dustin) distraction plan was executed. Thanks in no small part, of course, to the cunning of our resident Mage. (She makes a small gesture across the table to Eleven, who smiles and makes a curtsy motion) Now, our story continues – The Company of Will the Wise is hunted!

She slams the table, making everyone jump.

MAX

We resume our quest mere moments after this stunning revelation – a mysterious ranger, we learned, has been tailing our heroes for some time. Perhaps he means to impede our heroes' quest to uncover the mysteries of the Lord of the Shadow? Or, perhaps...

She pauses for dramatic effect. Eleven is captivated, and she's leaning over the table in anticipation.

MAX

...He means to take them for himself?

Max folds up her notes and sits back.

DUSTIN

Okay, that was pretty good. I have some pointers, but it can wait till another time.

LUCAS

Shuddup, Dustin. That was great, Max, you're getting way better than

any of us at this!

DUSTIN

(Under his breath) I want to see you at my desk after class.

Lucas kicks him.

EXT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - DUSK

A wide shot showcases the faded front of the general store as Joyce is locking up. She tugs on the door to double-check the integrity of the lock, then pockets the keys and turns to walk down the sidewalk. The camera follows her down the walk, angled to show Hopper's truck pull up beside her. She jumps slightly, but shortly thereafter smiles in recognition.

JOYCE

Hey, Hop.

JIM

Heya, Joyce. Jump in, I'll give you a lift.

She jogs around the front of his truck to the passengers' side. She clambers inside and gives him a smile once she's seated.

JOYCE

Sorry again, about having to leave Jane. Donald needed a shift covered and I couldn't leave him hanging again, not after last week –

JIM

Ah, don't sweat it. I'm sure she found something to do. Or eat.

He chuckles.

JIM

Besides, the boys should be at your place by now.

Joyce looks troubled at this, and Jim grows concerned.

JIM

Hey, what is it?

JOYCE

Oh, it's nothing... Probably nothing.

JIM

What?

JOYCE

Just – Just, Will had another nightmare last night. It's been so long since the last one, and I was beginning to think maybe he's done with them, but what if he's not and this thing is back, and Will is –

JIM

Hey, hey, hey – we've talked about this, Joyce. The kid went through some hard shit. It's gonna stay with him his whole life, and all we can do is be there for him when it gets too heavy. That damn thing isn't coming near him, or this town, ever again, you got that?

Joyce glances at him with equal parts appreciation and worry.

JOYCE

I know I worry too much. But dammit Hop, I'm running out of ideas.

She pauses, considering her next words.

JOYCE

I think – I think it might be best for Will if we left Hawkins.

Jim's eyebrows shift upwards.

JIM

Really?

Joyce tosses her hands.

JOYCE

I don't know. I don't know what else to do. I hate the thought of pulling him away from his friends, and his childhood home – but this is where it all happened. He's connected to this place, and I think it's destroying him.

There's a silence thicker than Hopper likes, and he breaks it a few moments later.

JIM

How about we grab some dinner, huh? I'm starving, and the kids can survive for another hour.

Joyce moves to protest, but Hopper puts out a hand.

JIM

Look, if anything goes wrong, we'll know.

He pats the radio clipped to his belt.

JIM

Jane's been getting better with contacting radios. She says she can listen in on the boys' conversations sometimes, which is either cool or creepy.

Joyce sighs.

JOYCE

Alright. I'd like that. Could you call her and let them know we won't be back till about 7, then?

JIM

Doesn't really work like that. I'll have to get to a payphone.

He pauses.

JIM

As much as I hate to admit this, those kids can hold their own. Especially when they've got Jane.

JOYCE

(Smiling at him) You've been an amazing father to her, Hop. She's growing up to be a kind, caring young lady.

He smiles back.

JIM

Yeah, she is, isn't she?

INT. STRONGHOLD BYERS – NIGHT

ELEVEN

Son of a bitch!

Will stifles a laugh as Mike plants a palm against his forehead.

MAX

The spell misses, ricocheting off the temple's walls. The Necromancers use this as an opportunity to retaliate!

She tosses the dice on the table with a flourish. They watch intently as the dice land, coaxing a deep groan from everyone but a giddy Max.

MAX

Direct hit! Mike the ever Triumphant (A glare from Mike) barely survives the brutality of the enemy!

DUSTIN

Oh shit.

LUCAS

You're out of potions, aren't you?

MIKE

(head on the table) Mhm.

Eleven thinks for a moment.

ELEVEN

Ok. I cast Mirror Image on Mike.

Mike glances at her, head still on the table.

Max tosses the dice.

MAX

It's effective – the enemy falls victim to the illusory charm, unable to distinguish between the true Mike and the reflection... (She rolls the

dice again) Their next attack misses him completely, hitting the mirror image but doing no damage!

A cheer rises from the table.

LUCAS

Nice one, El.

MIKE

Good thinking, you just saved me!

He beams at her. She smiles back, then glances over his shoulder out the window. It's dark out.

ELEVEN

Can we take a break?

The table collectively raises its eyebrows.

MAX

Sure, I guess?

Eleven shoots up from her pillow and, with a subtle hand motion, pulls her backpack to her. She shoulders it and leaves the trailer.

The remaining party members exchange confused glances, and Mike gets up to follow her. He opens the door after her and watches as she seats herself a few feet from the trailer, unzipping her bag and removing the Crayola box and a bunch of papers.

MIKE

El?

She turns to look at him.

MIKE

Is everything okay?

ELEVEN

Yeah.

She pats the ground next to her, then turns her attention to the sky.

Mike accepts her invitation to sit and wraps his arms around his knees. It's cold, and he's visibly chilly despite his sweater. He glances at her paper.

MIKE

How come you're so fascinated with the night sky?

She shrugs, still taking in the stars.

ELEVEN

It's pretty.

There's a lasting pause in which Mike nods.

ELEVEN

Mike?

MIKE

(Almost immediately) Yeah?

ELEVEN

Do you know a lot about the stars?

MIKE

Uh – Yeah, a bit. What do you want to know?

ELEVEN

What are they?

She looks at him, curious, and he sits in silence for a brief moment.

MIKE

Well, they're... basically, they're giant explosions in space. Bigger than planets and really, really far away.

ELEVEN

How far?

MIKE

Farther than we can ever go. Or, at least with the technology we have today.

She looks back up at the sky.

MIKE

The closest one to us is our Sun, and even that's really far.

She looks at him, eyebrows raised.

ELEVEN

Wow.

He nods.

MIKE

Yeah, there are two whole other planets on the way from here to the Sun.

ELEVEN

Like Earth?

MIKE

Sort of, but those other two are called Mercury and Venus. They're named after Gods from, like, two thousand years ago or something.

ELEVEN

Are there people there, too?

MIKE

Nope. As far as we know, all the life that exists is right here. On Earth.

ELEVEN

Why?

MIKE

Um, because those planets are too hot and there's no water and oxygen and stuff. They're just giant floating rocks.

Eleven ponders this, and the sky, for a moment.

ELEVEN

How many are there?

MIKE
Hmm?

ELEVEN
Stars. How many are there?

MIKE
Wow, um... Nobody knows. Some scientists think there are billions and billions.

ELEVEN
Billions?

MIKE
Yeah, billions.

He looks at her and realizes she's lost.

MIKE
Oh. Can I...?

He motions to a leaf of paper, and she hands him one along with a crayon.

MIKE
So... Well, what's the highest number you can count to?

ELEVEN
353.

He pauses and their eyes meet.

MIKE
Right. Well, um, 353 is really small when you think of a billion.

He draws three lines, and a half line next to it.

MIKE
Let's say each line here is a hundred. And this one, this little one is fifty, which is half of a hundred.

Eleven nods, focusing on the paper.

MIKE

So, there are ten hundreds in a thousand.

He draws six and a half more lines, completing the smaller line. Then he draws a slash through the ten.

MIKE

And there are one thousand thousands in a Million.

He hovers over the paper.

MIKE

Uh, I don't wanna draw a thousand lines –

ELEVEN

I understand.

MIKE

Oh, okay. Good. Well, after a Million, there's a Billion, which is a thousand Millions.

She squints her eyes and does the math. Then she shakes her head.

ELEVEN

That's really big.

MIKE

It's okay if you can't really understand. Nobody can, that's how big it is.

He looks back up at the stars.

MIKE

Too big to count.

She slides over the remaining space between them and rests her head on his shoulder, looking up at the sky with him.

INT. STRONGHOLD BYERS – NIGHT

Max and Dustin are sitting against the wall of the trailer examining a comic book, while Lucas and Will sit on the couch in silence.

LUCAS

(Hushed) What are they doing?

WILL

Why else would they sit alone outside?

LUCAS

What? No, not Mike and El. Them.

He nods his head towards Dustin and Max, who both quietly laugh at something.

WILL

They're just reading, man. You gotta stop getting jealous.

LUCAS

Jealous? Who's jealous? I'm not jealous.

They sit in silence for a few moments before Will glances at the digital clock radio sat haphazardly on the TV.

WILL

Uh oh.

LUCAS

What?

WILL

My mom said she'd be back by five. It's 5:15.

LUCAS

She's probably just working a bit late. Did she install that phone in here yet?

WILL

No. (He thinks for a moment) Hold on.

Will peeks his head out the trailer door, scanning the darkness until he notices Eleven resting her head on Mike's lap as she sketches the sky.

WILL

Psst! El?

Eleven glances up at him, as does Mike, who flashes an annoyed look.

ELEVEN

What is it, Will?

WILL

Uh – My mom hasn't come back yet. Could you, like, check up on her? See where she is? Or something?

ELEVEN

Yeah.

She nods and gets to her feet, jogging to the trailer. Mike follows. Once inside, she flips on the clock radio and tunes it until a light static can be heard, then she sits cross-legged in front of the TV and closes her eyes. Dustin and Max seem uninterested, and continue to talk in hushed tones until Mike hurls a throw pillow at them.

MIKE

Ssh!

He points to a focusing El, and the two silence themselves.

We cut to Eleven's view of the Void. She glances around her until she sees Joyce, sitting at a diner-style booth, looking slightly worried. Then, Hopper enters the vision, sitting across from her.

JIM

No answer. Do they have a phone in my old trailer?

JOYCE

No, dammit, I meant to put one in there.

JIM

They'll be fine.

JOYCE

Maybe we should go-

She starts to stand but Hopper raises a hand.

JIM

Hey, they'll be fine. If it's an emergency, Jane will give me a call.

Eleven moves closer to the table.

The bartender, a stout man wearing a greasy apron and hand towel, walks over to Hopper and Joyce's table.

JIM

Hey, Bruce.

BRUCE

Hey, Jim. Mrs. Byers. Sorry for the wait, as you can see we're packed to the teeth tonight. What can I get for ya?

JIM

Just gimme a burger. And a menu.

He brings a menu to the booth and hands it to Joyce, who takes it from him with a brief smile. Hopper looks at her reading it, regarding her with a faint frown. As he's about to speak up, she decides.

JOYCE

I'll have the, um, Ruben, please.

BRUCE

Sure.

He takes the menu and returns behind the bar.

JIM

(With hesitation) So... You serious about leaving Hawkins?

Eleven's expression melts from curious to shocked, and she leans in closer.

JOYCE

(Sighing) Maybe? I don't want to. I just – I don't know, I think we should at least leave for a summer or something. Just to see how he is. He's been having nightmares and panic attacks at least once a month, usually more. I don't want him to stay somewhere that's hurting him, but it'd kill me to take him away from his friends.

JIM

Just give the kid time. He'll always have to deal with this, no matter where he goes or how old he gets. But he'll learn to live with it.

JOYCE

(Insistent)

But he shouldn't have to. He shouldn't have to live with it, goddammit. He's only a boy.

JIM

I know, Joyce, I know. (He pauses) If you really think bringin' him away from Hawkins for a bit is the best thing to do, then you should.

Joyce simply nods, and along with Eleven looks lost in thought.

JIM

Have you talked to him about it?

JOYCE

Huh. Yeah, you can imagine how he responded.

Jim nods, prompting a silence.

JIM

Hey, let's change the subject, huh?

JOYCE

How's work?

JIM

Quiet. Nabbed that kid who slashed up all those tires on Thursday, the little shit. Slapped him with a fine and some community service. Other than that, nothing. How about you.

Joyce shrugs.

JOYCE

Same old. Same old sleepy town.

JIM

Heard from Jon at all?

JOYCE

Yeah, he called earlier this week. Says he's been pretty busy but school is going great, and he's still seeing Nancy every weekend. He asked about Will, of course.

JIM

What'd you say.

JOYCE

That he's fine. Jonathan doesn't need more to worry about.

The food is placed on the table in front of them and Joyce jumps.

JIM

Thanks, Bruce.

Bruce pats the table in a nonverbal acknowledgement and returns to the bar. Joyce takes a bite from her sandwich.

JIM

You know...

He stops to rub his neck. Joyce cocks her head in questioning, prompting him to continue.

JIM

You know, if you ever need help around the house... I mean, now that Jonathan's off at college, and you've got Jane all day, and work...

Joyce smiles through a mouthful.

JOYCE

Well now that you mention it, yeah, I could use a hand every now and then.

JIM

Just lemme know what you need, I'll be there.

JOYCE

Well, the trim could use repainting, the carpet still has those bloodstains that should be bleached, the yard is overdue for a weeding, the fridge needs to be looked at, the car needs some tuning and new brake pads...

Jim starts to laugh.

JIM

I'll see what I can do.

JOYCE

And Will's boom box is busted, but I figured I could get the boys to look at that.

JIM:

Jane may be able to help you there. In fact, she might even take a look at the engine, if you let her. Been devouring any book she can get her hands on, stuff like mechanics and astronomy. And she's already taken apart and rebuilt her own radio three times. Way smarter than I ever was.

He pauses in remembrance, deja-vu threatening him.

JOYCE

Oh, you're smart, Hop.

JIM

Yeah, I'm smart. I'm damn smart. Found your kid, didn't I?

He points his fork at her, and she chuckles.

Eleven stands up from the side of the table. As she does, her hands moves close to the radio clipped to Hopper's belt, and a sharp static wail spills out.

He jerks his gaze towards it, and at the same moment there's a smash cut to an aerial view of the Upside Down. The camera snaps around 90 degrees.

Back at the bar, Hopper frowns.

JOYCE

What the hell was that?

Eleven quickly opens her eyes and is back on the floor of the trailer.

WILL

Where is she?

MIKE

Give her a second.

She takes a moment to collect her thoughts, not making eye contact with anyone. She stands and turns off the radio.

ELEVEN

She's with Hop. They're getting dinner. He tried calling, but there's no phone here.

WILL

Oh. Ok.

MAX

Hopper and your mom on a date? Wonder what that means?

She scrunches her face in an expression of mock pondering. Will makes a disgusted face while Eleven faintly sports an amused smile.

WILL

Nothing! They're just getting dinner. My mom doesn't like the chief, that'd... no!

DUSTIN

Dude, if they got married, El would be, like, your crazy superhero step-sister.

Eleven smiles to herself at this.

WILL

Nobody's getting married! They're just at a restaurant!

MAX

(Dustin chiming in) Joyce and Hopper sittin' in a tree, K-I-S-S-I...

WILL

Oh my god, shut up, you guys.

EXT. UPSIDE DOWN

The camera is flying above the rotten environment, moving forward so fast the surrounding landscape is a blur.

EXT. HIDEAWAY BAR – NIGHT

Joyce and Hopper laugh drunkenly as they get into Hopper's truck. The second the driver's door slams shut, the shot switches to the Upside Down. The truck is no longer visible, the now-empty parking lot made clear by the flickering lights of the bar just barely in frame. A tendril of faraway lightning cracks in the background, briefly illuminating the hulking silhouette of the Mind Flayer lurking directly over the place where Hopper's truck sits.

INT. STRONGHOLD BYERS – NIGHT

The party is gathered around the DnD table again. Eleven is silent, almost like she's trying to listen to something. Lucas rolls the dice and breathes a sigh of relief.

MAX

The booby trap is disarmed without incident. A faint puff of smoke is released from the firebomb, which now falls dormant.

DUSTIN

One down, five hundred to go.

MIKE

(Under his breath) El? Is everything okay?

ELEVEN

Hmm?

She breaks from her vacant stupor to look at him.

ELEVEN

Yeah. I just... Never mind.

MIKE

What is it?

Eleven shakes her head.

ELEVEN

Nothing. Just a little tired.

He looks at her worriedly, but soon returns his attention to the table.

EXT. BYERS RESIDENCE – NIGHT

Hopper's truck pulls up to the Byer's house. They exit, drunkenly giggling, and Joyce fumbles with her keys for a solid moment before pushing into the house. She turns the lights on, blinks, and walks into the kitchen. Hopper follows and glances at the clock, which reads 11:43.

JIM

Ah, shit.

Joyce, hanging up her coat, looks at him.

JOYCE

What?

JIM

It's nearly midnight. Dammit, I didn't realize –

JOYCE

Since when do they ever go to sleep earlier than two in the morning anyway? Especially on the weekend.

JIM

I'm going to check on them.

He plods out the back door and across the yard, unsheathing his

flashlight. Clicking it on, he cuts the beam across the breadth of the woods. His light flickers slightly. He smacks it against his hand and continues into the woods. Making an effort to keep quiet, he follows the path carved into the ground until he arrives at the old trailer. The lights are still on inside, and the curtains are drawn – but the door is slightly ajar.

Picking up his pace, Hopper flicks off the flashlight and throws the door open – right into Dustin.

DUSTIN

Ow!

JIM

Jesus, kid, what the hell are you doing?

DUSTIN

Waiting for Will, he had to use the bathroom.

Hopper turns to see Will zipping his pants as he rounds the corner of the trailer. Surprised to see Hopper, he gives a slight wave.

JIM

There's a bathroom in the trailer.

DUSTIN

Yeah, but there are six of us and equally as many liter-bottles of Pepsi. I thought you were a cop.

Hopper sighs and nods.

JIM

Sorry. We didn't realize how late it was. Is everything okay?

WILL

Yeah, we've been fine. Is my mom back?

JIM

She's at the house.

Will nods and brushes by him to get into the trailer.

JIM

Where's Jane, we gotta get going.

Dustin shifts to show Jim the interior of the trailer, where Lucas is sitting against the wall next to the television. Eleven and Mike are curled up on the couch asleep, The Hobbit opened to the middle on his lap.

Hopper smiles, just barely, before scooping a balled-up napkin from the floor near the doorframe and tossing it at Eleven. It hits her in the side of the head, and she shifts awake.

JIM

Time to head home, sleepyhead.

She sits up and rubs her eyes, eventually registering who's speaking.

ELEVEN

Oh, okay. How was dinner?

JIM

Thought that was you earlier. Dinner was fine.

Mike sits up groggily, dog-earing the page in the book and tossing it on the coffee table, which was now mostly barren save for a few stray papers and pencils.

MIKE

She can't stay a bit longer?

JIM

It's midnight, dude. That's four hours bonus time.

Mike raises his eyebrows and turns to look at the clock on the TV. Eleven gets to her feet and slips her shoes, which were next to the couch, on her feet.

ELEVEN

See you tomorrow, guys.

MIKE

Goodnight.

They share a smile as Will waves her out.

DUSTIN

Oh, yeah, bye.

LUCAS

Mm.

Max exits the bathroom as she leaves the trailer.

MAX

Don't forget your backpack, freak.

She scoops it up from the floor, shovels in her papers and a single slice of pizza, and tosses it out the door after her. Eleven catches it with a smile.

Cut to the two of them in Hopper's truck. Eleven is leaning against door sleepily.

JIM

Did you have fun?

She nods, yawning.

JIM

Sorry we were so late. Lost track of time.

She doesn't seem too upset, simply shrugging. Jim glances over at her, considering his next words.

JIM

How long were you there?

ELEVEN

Not long.

JIM

Did you stick around? Hmm? Listen in on what we were talking about?

She continues looking out the window in silence, and Jim looks to try

and keep his temper in check.

JIM

We've talked about that, kid.

A beat of strained silence.

JIM

Look, whatever you heard is between myself and Joyce. You don't go telling your friends yet if you haven't already, okay?

ELEVEN

Friends don't –

JIM

Lie, yeah, I know, okay? This isn't lying, this is just... Not saying anything.

A bit of silence follows.

ELEVEN

Fine.

Hopper glances at her.

HOPPER

Thank you.

She sits with her arms around her knees, scrunched up on the seat.

EXT. CAFÉ – MORNING

THE NEXT MORNING

Jonathan is sitting under an umbrella'd café table. He's tapping his foot, anxious, a coffee mug in his right hand. He takes a sip and glances around, eventually landing his eyes across the street. Nancy notices him, waves, and jogs across the intersection to meet him.

JONATHAN

Hey!

NANCY

Hey, I'm really sorry I'm late.

JONATHAN

Oh, don't worry about it...

NANCY (Cont.)

I got caught up in a paper and lost track of time...

She starts unloading a worn briefcase and sets file folders on the table.

JONATHAN

How are you coming along with it?

NANCY

(Still unloading) Fine, I have a meeting with an executor of the paper at three which, if I'm lucky, will get me an interview, and then I need to...

She looks up at him in realization.

NANCY

Sorry. I'm a bit flustered.

He shrugs.

JONATHAN

That's ok, you've been busy.

She leans over the table and pecks him on the lips.

NANCY

Not too busy for you.

He smiles at her before she hurriedly sits back down.

NANCY

But – we do need to go over this.

She opens a file to reveal an information sheet about a heavysset balding man. The name Ray Carroll is printed above what appears to be a mugshot, next to the logo for Hawkins National Lab.

NANCY

One of our people of interest. He was found in his apartment this week –

JONATHAN

Dead?

NANCY

Comatose. Breathing, but on the floor and non-responsive.

Jonathan sits back in his chair and frowns.

JONATHAN

Did they give a reason? Stroke, or something?

NANCY

Well, of course they said it was a stroke. But this man had too many enemies – powerful enemies – for it to be natural. Still, we should dig a bit. Try and find his records, see if he had any history of heart issues.

She returns the folder to her briefcase.

NANCY

Maybe you could try and give Eleven a call this week. See if she may know anything about it – maybe Eight tracked him down again, managed to find him, or maybe it's something else...

JONATHAN

(Absently) Yeah.

NANCY

Hey, you ok?

JONATHAN

Oh, it's nothing... I talked to my mom the other day.

NANCY

How've they been?

JONATHAN

She says fine, but I know that she's just saying that.

He pauses.

JONATHAN

I think she's worried about Will.

NANCY

Has he been having nightmares again?

JONATHAN

I think so.

Nancy reaches across the table and takes his hand.

NANCY

(Softly) I can call Mike, have him check on Will for you.

JONATHAN: Thanks. I don't want to worry anyone, but...

NANCY

If something's wrong, they would have noticed. El definitely would have. But I'll call tonight. It's been a while since we talked, anyway.

Jonathan nods.

JONATHAN

I feel like I should be there. For him. It's getting around that time again, when everything happened -

NANCY

He'd want you to be here, he knows how much college has meant to you. Besides, I'm sure it's all fine. The poor kid went through some awful stuff – he's gonna have nightmares.

(She pauses for a moment)

I know I still do.

Jonathan looks up at her.

JONATHAN
So do I.

INT. HARRINGTON RESIDENCE- DAY

'And We Danced' by The Hooters is playing throughout a panning shot of the living room. The shot moves to show Steve on his side, hands underneath his refrigerator. He's fiddling with something underneath, a dirty toolbag and instruction manual sitting next to him. The shot continues moving until there's a knock at the door. Steve turns from the fridge, the lit cigarette dipping from his mouth. He stands, brushes his hands together and turns down the boom box sitting on the kitchen counter. He makes his way to the front door and opens it – It's Dustin.

STEVE
Hey, you're early.

DUSTIN
Yeah, uh... Sorry, I was just... bored.

Steve beckons him inside.

STEVE
You ever fixed a fridge before?

DUSTIN
What do I look like?

STEVE
Uh, a total geek who's good with wires and technology and shit?

DUSTIN
No, I've never fixed a fridge.

STEVE
Well, great. I've got no idea what I'm doing.

He kicks the tool bag.

DUSTIN

I thought you knew how to fix engines and stuff?

STEVE

I know how to tune a car, that's a bit different.

Dustin shrugs and dumps his backpack on a chair in the living room. Steve rinses his hands in the sink, discards the dish towel around his shoulder and walks over to him, plucking a trapper keeper from his backpack.

STEVE

Let's see what you've got here.

He starts to leaf through.

DUSTIN

(Defensively) It's a work in progress.

STEVE

Yeah, I can tell.

He glances up at Dustin and quickly backtracks.

STEVE

Well, hey, I mean –

DUSTIN

I know it's shit, alright?

Steve points at him.

STEVE

I didn't say that.

Dustin goes to grab the papers back from Steve but he dodges it and continues reading.

STEVE

Really, all this needs is some editing and a few curveballs and you've got yourself an A+ story, my man.

Dustin smiles at this.

DUSTIN

Really?

STEVE

Would I lie to you?

He ignores Dustin's expression and tosses him the papers.

DUSTIN

What about yours?

STEVE

Oh, uh... One second, let me grab it.

He turns on his heels and runs upstairs. Dustin takes this time to look around the kitchen, eyeing the fridge and the instruction manual. He pauses in front of the tool bag, then squats and spins the instruction manual to face him. Glancing it over, he then reaches his hand underneath the fridge and starts to feel around. He pulls back out to notice his fingers covered in a thin layer of soot.

DUSTIN

(Under his breath) The hell...

Steve comes back down the stairs, a notebook in his hand.

STEVE

Okay, so, I've written about half a chapter since last week – I know, not as much as I said I would, but it's been slow.

He puts it on the counter and slides it towards Dustin.

DUSTIN

What did you do to this thing?

He shows Steve his fingers and makes a face.

STEVE

Hey, I didn't do anything, alright? I went to grab a beer and noticed it wasn't cold so I tried to fix it.

DUSTIN

With a blowtorch?

STEVE

What?

Dustin further presents his sooty fingers and raises his eyebrows.

STEVE

I don't know, I guess the motor burned out or something. Look, if you can't fix it then don't worry about it, okay? It's my dad who's gonna throw a pissfit, not yours.

Dustin shrugs and flips through Steve's notebook. Steve leans in, biting his lip in apprehension.

DUSTIN

Do you want me to be nice or honest?

STEVE

Can you be both?

DUSTIN

It's predictable. I mean, right out the gate.

STEVE

Well how can it be predictable, it's only the third chapter –

DUSTIN

Have you ever seen any monster movie? Ever?

STEVE

Um... I saw Gremlins on VHS.

DUSTIN

Gremlins. That's it?

STEVE

I don't go to the movies much, cut me a break.

DUSTIN

Okay, me and you are having a horror movie-a-thon soon. You need

to be educated.

INT. HOPPER RESIDENCE - DAY

Eleven is in the bathroom in front of her mirror. She's splashing water in her face, waking herself up. She turns off the faucet and leans over the sink for a moment before running her fingers through her curls and flicking off the light. She walks into the living room, regarding the television in front of the couch for a moment before leaning against the doorframe and sighing. An image of the Mind Flayer is flashed and Eleven sinks her head into her hands.

An exterior shot of the cabin's door is shown, and a system of clicking noises signifies the array of locks disengaging.

EXT. HOPPER RESIDENCE

Eleven walks around to the back of the cabin, the camera following her around the corner. She squats in front of a flower garden, examining the staggered rows of slightly withered plants. She cups her hand around a petunia, and the scene changes around her – Hopper is there with her, and the flowers have been replaced with holes in freshly tilled soil.

JIM

So, this is a garden.

He's using a trowel to cut divots into the ground as Eleven watches intently, kneeling beside him.

JIM

Or, it will be, at least. Once we add those seeds we picked up earlier.

She glances at the small box nearby, which holds a variety of seed packets.

ELEVEN

And this will make flowers?

JIM

Yup, after a few months. The seeds go in the ground, here, and then with a bit of water and sunlight -

He taps the front of the seed pack.

JIM

Flowers. Presto.

Eleven smiles. Hopper finishes the last hole and hands the trowel off to Eleven.

JIM

Here. Take one of those little bags, there, and rip it open. Then sprinkle it into one of these holes.

She does so, accidentally pouring more than half the bag into a single hole.

ELEVEN

Oops...

JIM

That's fine, we can just move a few over.

He scoops some seeds up and distributes them across the bed.

JIM

Okay. Now, take that and smooth over the holes – yep, like that, make sure they're flat – and then you wanna take that can and pour some water on them.

She gingerly picks up the watering can and tips it, holding it with two hands, until it sprinkles over the soil. The scene returns to the present, Eleven kneeling in front of the now-grown flowers. She gets to her feet and walks to the shed, grabbing the watering can and bringing it to a faucet set next to the cabin. She fills the can and waters the flowerbed.

EXT. BAUMAN RESIDENCE – DAY

A vivid yellow 1973 De Tomaso Pantera pulls up in the driveway of Murray Bauman. The shot is low enough to show the driver's door opening and releasing a pair of combat boot feet. The shot follows this person to the door, and the camera raises to show the back of their head. He turns, the camera with him, to face the camera mounted next to the door. The man buzzes the door, then holds a badge to the camera. After a moment of silence, he thumbs the door button and speaks.

EDDIE

Mr. Bauman. This is the FBI – why don't you let me in, I'm only here to talk.

He turns to the camera again, and the shot allows for a side profile of his face – and his Ray-Bans.

EDDIE

I don't want to have to kick your door in, my friend.

A moment passes, and the door clicks unlocked. Murray, bathrobe and all, pokes his head out.

MURRAY

What do you want?

EDDIE

How about we step inside before one of us freezes?

He pushes by Murray without waiting for an answer.

EDDIE

I'm here to follow up on an investigation. Some new info regarding Hawkins Lab has come up, and they sent me to check on you and see what you may know.

He turns to face Murray, hands in the pockets of his deep blue trench coat.

EDDIE

So what do you know?

MURRAY

Um... Where do you want me to start?

EDDIE

How about from the beginning?

He turns and starts slowly walking the perimeter of Murray's apartment.

MURRAY

Uh, well –

EDDIE

And how's a drink sound, huh? I came all the way out here on a damn weekend, I can't even get an offer of whiskey?

Murray regards him for a moment before hesitantly turning to the kitchen.

MURRAY

Does Mr. Fed have a name?

EDDIE

They tell me my name is Eddie.

A cold smile surfaces.

MURRAY

(After a pause) Well, if you boys know that I know something, you must have read my exposé from '84, right? Everything I know is in there.

EDDIE

Of course, of course – but you know how these things go, we need to cover all our bases.

Eddie faces the walled-off room wherein sit the web of conspiracies regarding Eleven, Hawkins Lab, project MKULTRA, and Brenner. Currently, a sliding door is blocking it from view, and a padlock keeps it shut. He looks it over for a brief second before moving on, to Murray's relief.

MURRAY

Right. Of course.

He opens a kitchen drawer, slowly removing a Smith and Wesson.

MURRAY

Well, uh... That's pretty much it. The bulk of the story was to do with Barbara Holland – I'm unaware of any other victims who may have been affected by the leaks from the lab...

He opens the gun's cylinder, finding it loaded. He quickly stuffs it into the waistband of his sweatpants, watching Eddie, who is now looking around the sitting room.

MURRAY

Rocks?

Eddie glances at him from next to a lampstand with a phone on it.

MURRAY

In your drink?

EDDIE

I like mine extra rocky.

He flashes a quick grin. Murray nods, waiting for Eddie to turn away – but he doesn't. Murray warily turns his back to scoop ice from the freezer door and into the glasses. Eddie then turns away from him, removes a bowie knife from beneath his coat, and cuts the landline.

EDDIE

We're not quite focused on the leaks.

Eddie replaces his knife.

Eddie's now walking towards the kitchen. Murray, his back still turned, has stopped scooping ice.

MURRAY

Then... What do you want to know?

Eddie leans against the kitchen counter. Murray turns and hands him the drink, which Eddie accepts and takes a swig of.

EDDIE

Some of the facility's previous subjects have... fallen off our radar. We took a peek at our little list of individuals who had to do with HNL in the last few years – and you were on that list, my friend.

Murray seems to relax slightly.

MURRAY

Well, I have a file on the participants of project MKULTRA -

He moves to leave the bar area, but Eddie interrupts him.

EDDIE

No, not MKULTRA, that thread was ditched a while ago. We are interested in what it may have yielded, however.

Murray cocks an eyebrow.

MURRAY

You mean what sort of results they gave?

EDDIE

You can say that.

Eddie stands, drink in hand.

EDDIE

A few years back, sightings of a strange little girl popped up and down all over Hawkins. Know anything about that?

Murray swallows.

MURRAY

I heard about that. Didn't really think much of it, just some girl who ran away from home and got a little lost.

Eddie looks at him through his sunglasses for a moment.

EDDIE:

Well, she wasn't. She's of immense importance to the Bureau and any information you may be able to provide is... greatly appreciated.

Murray's gaze hardens.

MURRAY
Bullshit.

Eddie smirks.

EDDIE
Pardon?

Murray's hand dips beneath his bathrobe.

MURRAY
The FBI had their say in all of this two years ago, I was already briefed. They seized every scrap of information I had on Hawkins, the girl, everything. Not to mention no damn fed drives a car like that.

He flicks his head towards the front door.

EDDIE
You got me.

Murray draws his gun and trains it on Eddie.

MURRAY
Who are you, huh?

Eddie seems unperturbed as he raises his hands. He takes another swig of his whiskey.

MURRY
Who the hell sent you?

Eddie stands and takes his coat off, draping it over the barstool. Murray pulls the hammer on his gun back as Eddie walks around the counter.

MURRAY
Stay where you are! I'll shoot you!

EDDIE
No, my friend, you won't.

Murray's arms dip. Confused, he blinks and raises them again.

MURRAY

Stay... get back.

Eddie reaches for the gun and calmly takes it from his hand. As he does, Murray notices a tattoo stenciled on the inside his left wrist -
006

MURRAY

You – you're...

Eddie taps two fingers against Murray's forehead, and his face immediately wrinkles into a huge grin. He starts laughing, a chuckle that grows into full-out belly laughter. But Murray's eyes are fearful, darting around as his laughter pours out.

EDDIE

Have a drink, my friend.

He hands Murray the glass of whiskey. Murray takes it, but does not drink. Instead, he continues laughing.

Eddie remembers the gun and opens and examines the cylinder. He walks over to the sliding doors on the other side of the room and shoots off the padlock. Amongst the hysterical laughter of Murray, Eddie slides open the doors to reveal the conspiracy room. He stands, examining the web of information, hastily redrawn and thrown together. Stepping in, he cocks his head in pondering as he fixates on one sketch in particular – that of a shear-headed young girl. A thud is heard, accompanied by the shattering of a glass – but Murray Bauman's laughter does not cease. Eddie turns to close the sliding doors, a single trickle of blood trailing from his nose and down his lip.

Murray Bauman is on the floor, glass and ice shards next to his head, his body frozen in laughter while his eyes are frozen in fear.

END OF EPISODE ONE.

Author's Note:

Hey. Thanks for reading all 11k words of this mess. If you liked it, let me know - If you didn't, let me know what I can do better.

This is a script I wrote for practice/an excuse to write something Stranger Things related. I have some plans to continue this, so if you'd like to see more gimme a comment and I'll see what I can do!